



Family Food & Fun Night

What is it?

Students and families come together at an already scheduled school-wide event (such as a school open-house or PTA/PTO sponsored activity) for a night of food, fun, and physical activity.

Getting started

Form a planning committee to help organize the event. Include students, parents, teachers, food-service staff members, county Extension staff members, local health professionals, your school nurse, the school principal, and PTA/PTO members. Choose a date and a place (e.g. school gym, cafeteria, hallways) to hold *Family Food and Fun Night*.

Next steps

Choose (or create your own) fun, interactive games and activities for families to take part in that promote the goals of Team Nutrition (see page 1 of this booklet). Look in the *Community Nutrition Action Kit* (by downloading from www.fns.usda.gov/tn) for some great ideas, including:

- Favorite Fruit Collages
- Great Grain Obstacle Course
- Silly Syllable Scramble

Once you know what games and activities you will offer, design a simple evaluation form that will allow participants to comment on what they've done. (See the evaluation section of this booklet, *Evaluation Tips and Tools for Team*

Nutrition Events, for great ideas and sample surveys.)

In addition to activities and games, you can also set up an "Education Station" that students and parents can visit to receive information about other school or community programs that also support the Team Nutrition goals, such as community education programs, intramural sports programs, after-school clubs, and others.

Foodservice link

Your school foodservice director can set up a table and...

- answer parents' questions about school meals.
- create a display that shows the nutritional value of one or two favorite school lunches.
- provide samples for parents and students to taste and rate new food items that are being considered for the school lunch or breakfast programs.

Home link

Get the word out about *Family Food and Fun Night* to parents and families in lots of different ways: advertise on school menus, write an article for your school newsletter, post flyers on school doors, and send home an invitation with students. Give a copy of the Team Nutrition family cookbook *Food, Family and Fun: A Seasonal Guide to Healthy Eating* to the first ten families that attend the event. To order this book, call the National Food Service Management Institute at (800) 321-3054.



Classroom link

- Art students can decorate the cafeteria (or wherever you decide to hold the event) with posters and artwork that promote eating healthy and being physically active. If you have a Team Nutrition school banner be sure to use that too.
- Language Arts students can create a game based on the Food Guide Pyramid or another nutrition-related theme.
- Math teachers can help students tally the taste-testing evaluation forms.

Involve your community

- Invite community supporters to help run a booth or station.
- Ask health-related agencies (e.g. county Extension office, local office of the American Cancer Society, etc.) to provide resources for the Education Station, such as pamphlets or brochures.
- Ask business owners to put up posters to publicize the event.

Involve the media

Prepare a public service announcement to promote *Family Food and Fun Night*. Contact your local radio station and ask them to air your announcement. Invite a reporter from your local newspaper to attend, take pictures of, and write an article about the event.

Team Nutrition Resource Link:

Do you have a Team Nutrition school banner for your school? Call the national Team Nutrition office at (703) 305-1624 to order. Available while supplies last.

Web Link:

www.familyfoodzone.com

This is one refrigerator you will want to visit in the middle of the night because it is full of nutrition information to help busy families make healthful food choices.

Books for Kids:

Rabbit Food
by Susanna Gretz